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UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD
STEERING GROUP ON MONITORING STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATIONS

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SA/SAL - 27772
21 August 1972
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MEMORANDUM FOR: CIA Member, SALT Monitoring Working Group

SUBJECT: Request for Contribution to SALT MONITORING EVALUATION

Attached are Terms of Reference for an up-to-date evaluation of US intelligence capabilities to monitor Soviet compliance with the 26 May 1972 strategic arms limitation agreements, as approved by the SALT Monitoring Working Group on 17 August. It is requested that CIA provide a contribution in the form of a draft evaluation of intelligence capabilities to perform the various tasks indicated. The target date for this contribution is Friday, 13 October 1972.

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Howard Stoertz, Jr. *HS*
Chairman

SALT Monitoring Working Group

Attachment:

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SA/SAL - 27/72

SUBJECT: Request for Contribution to SALT MONITORING EVALUATION

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UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD
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17 August 1972

SALT MONITORING EVALUATION

A. Background

1. There is a need for an up-to-date evaluation of US intelligence capabilities to meet SALT monitoring needs. Previous such evaluations do not take account of the most recent developments in intelligence programs and are not based on the specific provisions of the agreements reached between the US and USSR on 26 May 1972. In accordance with its charter (USIB-D-27.5/5), the USIB Steering Group on Monitoring Strategic Arms Limitations has decided to undertake an up-to-date evaluation, to be submitted to the Director of Central Intelligence.

2. The following paragraphs and Annex, prepared by the SALT Monitoring Working Group, outline certain general considerations affecting the SALT monitoring responsibility and set forth a series of specific monitoring tasks drawn from a review of the 26 May agreements. These materials are designed to provide guidance for contributions to the evaluation of intelligence monitoring capabilities.

B. General Objectives of SALT Monitoring

3. In broad terms, the principal responsibility of US intelligence with respect to monitoring the 26 May agreements is to perform the intelligence collection and analysis necessary to provide timely warning of any significant Soviet violation of the agreements. "Timely warning" implies the communication of intelligence conclusions to policymakers, with conviction and supported by persuasive evidence, soon enough after the beginning of a Soviet program of noncompliance so that the US can decide upon and take whatever actions are necessary to protect its interests. A "significant Soviet violation" implies a deliberate program of noncompliance having sufficient magnitude or impact to threaten US security.

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4. In SALT monitoring as in other intelligence responsibilities, there is no possibility of achieving 100 percent assurance that collection and analysis programs, no matter how well conceived and executed, will provide timely warning ~~in all cases~~. What is required is to achieve, by ensuring that sufficient resources are properly focussed on the objective, high assurance that timely warning can be provided and that the absence of evidence of ~~violations~~ is in fact evidence of Soviet compliance. The SALT monitoring responsibility therefore includes the requirement that intelligence managers be able to satisfy themselves and demonstrate to policymakers that ~~high assurance is being achieved~~. This requires careful evaluation and re-evaluation of ~~intelligence capabilities versus monitoring needs~~.

C. Special Aspects of SALT Monitoring

5. Much of the SALT monitoring responsibility is neither new nor unique. The provisions of the 26 May agreements were negotiated with US ~~unilateral~~ intelligence capabilities in mind. The areas, activities and forces affected by the agreements are some of the same ones that have been priority targets of US intelligence for many years. The intelligence community has been collecting and analyzing information on them with a degree of success which is generally conceded to have been adequate to meet US ~~strategic intelligence~~ requirements ~~outstanding at the time~~.

6. The requirements of SALT monitoring ~~are~~ somewhat ~~different~~ ^{are} those of strategic intelligence, however. The differences arise from (a) the political import of a Soviet violation of the agreements, and (b) the steps which could be involved in a US response to evidence of a Soviet violation.

a. Political Import of a Soviet violation. The SALT agreements are legal documents in which the agreed limitations are couched in quite specific terms. While there might be little strategic impact if, say, the USSR resumed construction of an abandoned ICBM launcher or failed to begin dismantling older ICBM launchers when the submarine carrying the ~~on a nuclear sub~~ began sea trials, the political significance of such a violation could be very large, ~~perhaps~~. Any violation could be the first sign of a change in Soviet policy which could be highly detrimental to US security interests. In this

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longer term

respect, the SALT monitoring responsibility involves prompt identification and warning of the fact of a Soviet violation of the agreements, ~~This fact could in turn reflect a program of sufficient magnitude to threaten US security, but for SALT monitoring purposes, determination of the size and pace of the unauthorized program is a lesser objective.~~

being
b. Steps involved in a US response. Intelligence warning would not necessarily or automatically be followed by prompt US countermeasures. Indeed, intelligence might at first be able to warn only of an ambiguous situation, particularly in the early stages of a Soviet program. Additional collection and analysis might then be required to add a sense of conviction backed up by persuasive evidence. In any case, under the SALT agreements additional time-consuming steps could be involved in a US attempt to modify Soviet behavior. These could include: policy decision to raise the issue with the Soviets in the Standing Consultative Commission; judgment of potential gains and losses in releasing intelligence evidence; preparation, clearance, and presentation of brief in the SCC; awaiting Soviet response and evidence as to whether the USSR had ceased its actions of noncompliance. Finally, should the US determine that the situation so threatened its vital national interests that it must abrogate the agreements, the treaty calls for it to state its reasons and give six months' notice. Such an action would undoubtedly require additional decision-making, preparation of briefs, and consultation with the Senate. Thus if Soviet behavior were not modified, the steps outlined could shorten the leadtime available for US countermeasures prior to the emergence of a Soviet operational threat.

7. These special aspects of the SALT monitoring problem argue that US policymakers will need and expect the minimum feasible delay between the beginning of any Soviet act of noncompliance and warning of the fact of it by US intelligence. This means that SALT monitoring objectives should include the achievement of short identification times, high confidence, and ~~small margins of error.~~ *narrowly ranged estimates.*

D. Method of Evaluating SALT Monitoring Capabilities

8. The listing of tasks at Annex is based on an article-by-article review of the 26 May agreements and associated agreed statements, common understandings, and US unilateral statements. It is intended to cover

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those Soviet activities which should be monitored in order to ensure timely warning of a significant violation. Relevant provisions and associated statements are referenced under each task. The listing takes no account of the tasks which would be involved in monitoring dismantling and destruction under the SALT agreements, because detailed procedures for such dismantling and destruction have not yet been agreed.

9. In evaluating US intelligence capabilities to accomplish the tasks listed, three key variables need to be considered:

a. Time: Depending on the nature of the task, the appropriate time consideration may be either (1) the likely delay between the beginning of a given Soviet activity and its identification by US intelligence, or (2) the time interval during which a comprehensive count or review of a number of locations or areas can be achieved on a repetitive basis. The evaluation of monitoring capabilities should consider the time required for intelligence collection, processing, and analysis.

b. Level of Confidence: In association with a delay time or a time interval, level of confidence is the certainty with which it is estimated that a given activity will in fact be identified. In most tasks, the evaluation should estimate the time required to achieve a very high level of confidence (i.e. 90%).

Range of estimate c. Margin of Error: A criterion appropriate to tasks where counts or measurements are required.

10. In evaluating monitoring capabilities, the foregoing variables should be treated flexibly. As an example, in Task 8 it may be appropriate to discuss the probability of identifying one out of x-number of tests occurring during a period of y months. Other such adjustments may be desirable.

11. Contributions should address each of the tasks set forth in the Annex. They should deal primarily with present US intelligence capabilities to monitor Soviet systems and programs under normal conditions, but consideration should be given to the effects of planned changes in US programs over the next two years or so and of possible Soviet concealment or deception. Please describe briefly the collection and exploitation means appropriate to each task, evaluate US intelligence capabilities to accomplish the task, and indicate any adjustments you recommend in existing or programmed capabilities and priorities for collection and exploitation in response to SALT monitoring needs.

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